



Natural Area NEWS

Winter 2003

No. 13

We are pleased to return with another issue of Natural Area News, following a hiatus of a little over a year. Financial constraints led to a delay in publication. We hope to continue getting this newsletter to you in the future, perhaps a little less frequently than in the past.

Since the last newsletter, there has been a lot of progress regarding natural area protection and management. Indiana now has 189 dedicated nature preserves. There are now at least 16 land trusts in Indiana working to protect our natural lands. Several species new to or extremely rare in Indiana were discovered in 2002. And the Indiana Heritage Trust Program continues to play an important role in acquisition for natural areas around the state.

Some changes occurred during 2002. The DNR has a new Director, John Goss, who came to us from the Department of Commerce. John is a veteran of many years on the Natural Resources Commission, and has hit the ground running. John Davis, former Land Acquisition Director, is now the Department Director of the Bureau of Lands and Resource Management.

Cary Floyd, who recently returned to Nature Preserves as the Natural Areas Registry Director, is now Coordinator of Operations for the Division of Nature Preserves. Ken Brunswick, Wetland Restoration Specialist with the Limberlost State Historic Site, has joined the Division of Nature Preserves as a Regional Ecologist. Ken will continue to oversee the restoration of the Limberlost Swamp and Loblolly Marsh as part of his duties (see story on page 7).

We continue to look for economies as we strive to protect and manage natural areas more efficiently. Volunteers and donors have always played a major role, and will be more critical in the future. Switching from receiving this newsletter in the traditional way to becoming an electronic subscriber is one way you can help. Please feel free to send us your ideas and suggestions. With your help, 2003 will be another good year.

A quick look:

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8. Portland Arch Addition Dedication



Please let us know if you can receive this newsletter electronically. Send us an email to rhellmich@dnr.state.in.us. Thanks for helping us save trees and money.

Nature Preserves is a division of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources

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New Nature Preserves

Eight new nature preserves were dedicated in 2002 encompassing 1051 acres. Indiana's Nature Preserve system consists of 189 nature preserves.

Alum Cave Hollow: Alum Cave Hollow Nature Preserve, Clark County, is a 142 acre portion of the Clark State Forest. It contains a great variety of natural communities including siltstone cliffs, mesic, dry-mesic, and dry upland forests, including examples of native Virginia Pine.

Schroeder's Fern Cove: Schroeder's Fern Cove Nature Preserve in Clark County is a 70 acre tract owned and managed by the Division of Nature Preserves. This site gets its name for the Schroeder Family who bought it in 1981 for its protection. The preserve has both mesic and dry upland forests on steep slopes dominated by chestnut oak and Virginia Pine.

McCormick's Cove: McCormick's Cove Nature Preserve, Owen County, is a 177 acre tract located in McCormick's Creek State Park. The site protects high quality mesic and dry-mesic upland forests, high quality mesic and wet-mesic floodplain forests, and outstanding examples of limestone cliffs and canyons.

The Narrows: The Narrows Nature Preserve, Harrison County, is a 75 acre property that contains limestone cliffs and mesic upland forests on a narrow backbone forming a loop on the Blue River. This nature preserve is owned and managed by the Division of Nature Preserves.

Buddha Karst: Buddha Karst Nature Preserve, Lawrence County, is a 37 acre property. This tract contains caves, springs, sinkholes, and karst geological features. This nature preserve is owned and under the administration of the Indiana Karst Conservancy.

Stout Woods: Stout Woods Nature Preserve in Henry County is a high quality example of a Central Till Plain Flatwoods. This 35 acre property is owned and under the administration of Purdue University's Department of Forestry and Natural Resources. It was given to Purdue University by the Stout Family in 1964.

Chelsea Flatwoods: Chelsea Flatwoods Nature Preserve, Jefferson County, is a 305 acre property owned by The Nature Conservancy. Chelsea Flatwoods is the largest and most diverse example of a "Bluegrass Till Plain Flatwoods" remaining in Indiana.

Bluffs of Beaver Bend: Bluffs of Beaver Bend Nature Preserve in Martin County is a 210 acre tract situated along the White River in Martin County. The Nature Preserve is owned and managed by the Division of Nature Preserves. The property consists of a mile long steep-sided bluff situated in a bend of the White River. The principal natural features of the property include cliffs and rockshelters of Mansfield sandstone running the length of the bluff and examples of mesic and dry-mesic forest

Natural Area News is published by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Nature Preserves. All questions, comments, or requests should be mailed to the Division of Nature Preserves at 402 W. Washington St., Rm W267, Indianapolis, IN 46204. We can be reached by calling 317-232-8059, or faxing to 317-233-0133.

Nature Preserves is looking for articles. If you or your group would like to submit any news or information relating to natural areas and their protection, please send it to the Division of Nature Preserves, attention Ron Hellmich.

Nature Preserves: Identifying, protecting and managing an array of nature preserves to maintain viable examples of all of Indiana's natural communities for the benefit of the natural communities, their representative species, and future generations.

John Goss, Director
Indiana Dept. of
Natural Resources

John Davis, Deputy
Director, Indiana Dept.
of Natural Resources

John Bacone, Director
Division of Nature
Preserves, Indiana
Dept. of Natural
Resources

Ron Hellmich and
Roger Hedge, Editors

Some Indiana Land Trusts:**Northern Indiana:**

ACRES Land Trust
2000 North Wells St.
Fort Wayne, IN 46808

Trillium Land Trust
1717 East Lusher Ave.
Elkhart, IN 46516

LaPorte County
Conservation Trust
405 Maple Avenue
LaPorte, IN 46350

Glacial Ridge Historic
Land Trust
PO Box 627
New Paris, IN 46553-
0627

Shirley Heinze Land Trust
444 Barker Road
Michigan City, IN 46360

Wawasee Area
Conservancy Foundation
6938 East Waco Drive
Syracuse, IN 46567

Central Indiana:

Central Indiana Land
Trust, Incorporated
PO Box 509074
Indianapolis, IN 46250

Southern Indiana:

Sycamore Land Trust
PO Box 7801
Bloomington, IN
47407-7801

Buffalo Trace Land Trust
PO Box 2
Mt. St. Francis, IN 47146

Indiana Karst
Conservancy
P.O. Box 2401
Indianapolis, IN 46206-
2401

Wabash Heritage Land
Trust
PO Box 732
New Harmony, IN
47631-0732

NICHES Land Trust:

Website: www.NICHESlandtrust.org

President: Susan Ulrich

Background: Formed in 1995, NICHES Land Trust is an all-volunteer, non-profit, natural areas land trust serving Benton, Carroll, Cass, Clinton, Fountain, Jasper, Montgomery, Newton, Pulaski, Tippecanoe, Warren and White Counties.

NICHES stands for Northern Indiana Citizens Helping Ecosystems Survive. NICHES' goal is to protect scenic beauty, provide habitat for wildlife, and offer natural places for the education and aesthetic enjoyment of current and future generations. NICHES is run by a fifteen-member Board of Directors. It currently has 275 regular members. It protects 12 properties which total 1107 acres. Eleven of these properties are owned outright by NICHES. The other one is protected by a conservation easement. In 2002, NICHES acquired 1 property protecting 220 acres.

NICHES maintains 3 endowment funds. The NICHES Land Trust Prairie Fund is maintained by the Benton County Community Foundation. This fund provides support for NICHES with special emphasis on "acquiring, restoring, and preserving remnants of Indiana's native prairies." The NICHES Land Protection Fund is maintained by the Covington Community Foundation to provide support to NICHES and its general operating expenses. The NICHES Land Trust Fund maintained by the Warren County Community Foundation also provides support to the role and mission of NICHES. Check out NICHES' website for information on how to donate.

Land Protection Priorities:

1. Natural Areas of the Wabash River and Its Tributaries
2. Grand Prairie Natural Areas
3. Other, High-Value Natural Communities
4. Conservation Easements

Ohio River Conservancy
1020 N Indiana
Bloomington, IN 47408-
8193

Southeastern IN:
Oak Heritage Conser-
vancy
PO Box 335
Hanover, IN 47243

East Central Indiana:
Redtail Conservancy
959 W CR 500S
Muncie, IN 47302

Whitewater Valley
Land Trust
4910 Shoemaker Road
Centerville, IN 47330

West Central Indiana:
NICHES
PO Box 2790
West Lafayette, IN 47906-
2790

Statewide:
The Nature Conservancy
1505 N. Delaware
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Management notes

Invasive Plant Species Assessment Working Group

The Division of Nature Preserves is a very active participant in a committee whose goal is to develop and implement an assessment tool for ranking the invasiveness of aggressive plant species. The majority of these aggressive species are non-native, or non-native strains of native species. The committee hopes that through education and information sharing, it can persuade any current sources for the sale or distribution of invasive species, to voluntarily halve any such activities.

The committee is composed of a wide range of representatives including several divisions of IDNR: Entomology; Nature Preserves; Fish & Wildlife; Forestry; Parks & Reservoirs; Reclamation; as well as Indiana Department of Environmental Management; Indiana Department of Transportation; Indiana Academy of Sciences; Natural Resources Conservation Service; Indiana State Seed Commissioner; Hoosier National Forest; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; Indiana Beekeepers Association; Indiana Forage Council; Indiana Nursery Landscape Association; Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society; The Nature Conservancy; the American Society of Landscape Architects; and others.

The assessment tool has been developed. Field botanists are gathering information on particular species and submitting the information to the committee to be “run through” the assessment. Sub-committees will begin the assessment procedure in the near future.

Preserve Management and Restoration

DNP Regional Ecologists work to restore and maintain natural ecological processes and systems. Much of the work requires controlling exotic species that compete with native species, and maintaining naturally open communities like prairie, through the use of prescribed burning or mowing.

During the past year, prescribed fire was carried out on 625 acres at 16 sites. The Division gets help from other DNR divisions, private conservation organizations and volunteers. Independent contractors also completed 4 burns encompassing 38 acres.

Regional Ecologists continued their regional efforts to control exotic species and remove invasive woody vegetation on several preserves containing prairie, savanna, barrens and fen communities. The main targets were exotic species, including purple loosestrife, glossy buckthorn, garlic mustard, *Microstegium*, *Phragmites*, and bush honeysuckle. In addition, control of woody plants that invade prairies and other open communities was very successful.

In addition to existing purple loosestrife biocontrol insects that have been released in Indiana for several years (*Galerucella pusilla* and *G. calmariensis* are leaf-feeding beetles, and *Hylobius transversovittatus* is a root-feeding weevil), a new insect has been released in Indiana for the first time. Two hundred *Nanophyes marmoratus*, a flower-feeding weevil, were released at each of 5 locations. Although they are not expected to reduce existing populations of loosestrife, they are expected to reduce seed production and therefore reduce the ability of loosestrife to recolonize areas or spread to new ones.

Additional nature preserves benefiting from management work included trails at Big Walnut, and removal of an oil well access road at Twin Swamps.

In Memoriam

We were saddened to learn of the passing of Ray Schulenberg, one of the pioneers of the prairie protection movement.

In addition to personally mentoring many of today's prairie and natural area enthusiasts he influenced countless others. His prairie restoration at the Morton Arboretum serves as the model for which to strive.

Perhaps more importantly, Ray helped link natural areas ecology and preservation with the National Environmental Policy Act. He helped show that impacting remnant natural areas was an irreversible and irretrievable act. Once impacted, remnant natural areas can never be fully restored.

RARE PLANT DISCOVERIES

The following are some highlights of rare plant finds in Indiana during the past couple of years: Short's goldenrod (*Solidago shortii*) – The singular discovery of this globally imperiled plant topped the list of exciting finds in Indiana. Until the discovery of this goldenrod on a limestone outcrop along the Blue River in Harrison Co., the only other known area on earth for this species, was more than a hundred miles away in the Blue Lick Springs area of Kentucky.

Red root (*Ceanothus herbaceus*) – A closer look at the Short's goldenrod site turned up this state endangered shrub, which is confined mostly to the Great Plains. Eastern populations are known mostly in sandy and rocky habitats of the Great Lakes region. An historic occurrence is known in Indiana from the sand dunes bordering Lake Michigan, but it is considered long extirpated both from that area, and until this discovery, the state.

Oklahoma sedge (*Carex oklahomensis*) – This sedge is found primarily in the southern Great Plains, but scattered occurrences are known further east. Several plants of this state endangered sedge were discovered in the sand dune region of Daviess Co., at a property owned and managed by DNP. This is the only extant occurrence in the state. The state threatened scirpus-like rush (*Juncus scirpoides*) and clasping St. John's-wort (*Hypericum gymnanthum*), state endangered were also found here.

Hall's bulrush (*Schoenoplectus hallii*) – The first population of this endangered wetland sedge outside of the Lake Michigan Dune region was discovered from an ephemeral pond in a sandy depression in Daviess Co.

Frogbit (*Limnobium spongia*) – The first documented population of this aquatic plant for Indiana was found in a swamp within the Buffalo Pond Nature Preserve in Dubois Co. This species of southern geographic affinities is characteristic of swamps, and has long been known to occur in such habitats in nearby southern Illinois and western Kentucky.

Lake cress (*Armoracia aquatica*) – A large population of this state endangered species was found in a flooded "linear depression" in Daviess Co. just south of Elnora.

Populations of hemlock parsley (*Conioselinum chinense*) and highbush cranberry (*Viburnum trilobum*), both state endangered, as well as the state threatened black-fruit mountain-ricegrass (*Oryzopsis racemosa*) were all discovered in a forested fen in Steuben Co.

Woodland strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*) and great St. John's-wort (*Hypericum pyramidatum*), both state endangered plants were located on sandstone outcrops along Sugar Mill Creek in west-central Indiana.



Indiana Heritage Trust

In 2002, a number of IHT projects were approved for the following significant natural areas in partnership with the Division of Nature Preserves.

Site	Location (county)	Feature	Cooperators (with DNP)
Ambler Flatwoods	LaPorte	Boreal flatwoods	NAWCA; SHLT; TNC
Fisher Oak Savanna	Jasper	Post oak flatwoods, oak savanna	NICHES
Mosquito Creek Addition	Harrison	Glades, caves, Mosquito Creek	TNC
Moraine Addition	Porter	Forested uplands and ravines	SHLT; ICP; TNC
Boot Lake Addition	Elkhart	Upland forest, wetlands	NAWCA; LAWCON; City of Elkhart; IPL, DU
Twin Creek Valley	Washington	Caves, glades, upland forest	TNC
Portland Arch addition	Fountain	Sandstone cliffs, oak woodlands	TNC
Charles Spring addition	Washington	Blue River, limestone cliffs, caves	TNC
Big Walnut addition	Putnam	Forested ravines, critical buffer	TNC
Dygert NP	Whitley	Upland forest, streams	ACRES
Wildwood NP	Kosciusko	Wetlands, upland forest, restored prairie and forest	Frantz Family; ACRES

DNP = IDNR Div. of Nature Preserves; TNC = The Nature Conservancy; NAWCA = North American Waterfowl Conservation Act; ACRES = Acres Land Trust; SHLT = Shirley Heinze Land Trust; NICHES = Niches Land Trust; ICP = Indiana Coastal Program; LAWCON = Land and Water Conservation Fund; DU = Ducks Unlimited; IPL = IPALCO Golden Eagle Award Program

Using your car to support another cause...

You can still donate to the Heritage Trust Fund without buying an environmental license plate.

Donated money is used to acquire the same types of land as the license plate revenue.

Make your check payable to the **Indiana Heritage Trust Fund** and send your donation to: John Goss Director, Department of Natural Resources 402 W. Washington St. Room W256 Indianapolis, IN 46204

Nongame Tax Checkoff

Tax season is the perfect time to help Indiana's endangered wildlife. Donations to the Endangered Wildlife Fund, located on the state's income tax form, helps fund research to keep Indiana's wildlife diversity intact.

Donate a portion of your tax refund where you see the eagle on line 30 of the state income tax form (or Line 12 of the EZ form), or send in a direct donation to the Division of Fish & Wildlife. Look for more information at the Division of Fish & Wildlife's Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program's website at found at www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/index.html.

DNP Assists with “Limberlost Remembered” Project

Gene Stratton Porter’s “Limberlost” has begun to thrive again in the past decade. Led by Ken Brunswick and DNR’s Division of Museums and Historic Sites, a number of partners coalesced around the idea of reconstructing the Limberlost Swamp. With countless supporters and partners, over 1000 acres have been purchased, and are in the process of wetland restoration.

The staff of the Limberlost State Historic Site has been leading interpretive tours of the restoration projects, and procuring grants to allow for the restoration to continue. In an effort to find cost efficiencies and streamline operations at the Limberlost State Historic Site, the Limberlost Swamp Wetland Restoration and the Loblolly Marsh Wetland Restoration have been transferred to the Division of Nature Preserves. Ken Brunswick, who has been the project coordinator, will transfer to Nature Preserves as well. Plans are for the restoration project to continue, both in terms of managing the lands that have been acquired to date, and in terms of seeing the project through to its envisioned size and scope.

Nature Preserves staff and staff from nearby DNR properties will continue to work with the Limberlost partners in this endeavor. Ken Brunswick will also be able to assist in the oversight of several nature preserves in his region, as the Division of Nature Preserves newest Regional Ecologist.

DNP Employee of the Year

Cliff Chapman was recognized as the DNP’s employee of the year. Cliff is responsible for nature preserves in the southeast region of Indiana. He energetically takes on his management responsibilities, devoting a lot of his efforts to the control of invasive species, and to the management of glades, barrens, and other types of natural areas. Much of the time he devotes to these activities is spent on lands owned and managed by other divisions such as Spring Mill State Park, Charlestown State Park, and Clark State Forest. Cliff has also worked extensively with DNR partners, assisting land trusts with inventory, protection, and management efforts. He leads numerous hikes for interested citizens at nature preserves in his region, and has presented programs to a number of groups. Congratulations Cliff!

Donations Gratefully Accepted

Thanks to..... Lakehead Pipeline Company, for a donation to Hoosier Prairie Nature Preserve. The Geography Network of Indiana for a donation to the Division of Nature Preserves; Duane Gallo and Family for the donation of several cameras; Lisa Dietz and Family for the donation of a heavy duty push mower; Landscape Architects of Indianapolis for the donation of a scanner.

Wish List.....

The Division of Nature Preserves is in need of several pieces of equipment... (1) a tractor mower or bobcat to assist with nature preserve management; (2) a digital camera to help with nature preserve monitoring; (3) file cabinets.

If you are interested in a possible donation, please contact Cary Floyd at 317-232-0207.

Thank you!

Natural Area News

Division of Nature Preserves
402 W Washington St Rm W267
Indianapolis IN 46204

Mark Your Calendars

Celebrate the Dedication of the Samuel Miller-Ronald Campbell Addition to Portland Arch Nature Preserve

Please join us on Saturday, April 26, at 11:00 am, to celebrate the dedication of an addition to Portland Arch Nature Preserve. The 142 acre addition is named after Sam Miller and Ron Campbell, two men who devoted years of their life to the protection and care of this wonderful nature preserve.

Sam Miller, who lived in nearby Covington, was one of the group who spearheaded the effort to acquire Portland Arch when it was put up for sale by the Boy Scouts. Following its purchase, he helped care for it for many years, leading hikes, helping to install the trails, and monitoring the preserve. Sam is remembered for his commitment to the people and places of Indiana. He led by quiet example and his life remains an inspiration to those who knew him.

Ron Campbell, one of the Division of Nature Preserves first employees, spent many long, cold days at Portland Arch, installing the fences and trails. Ron worked for many years with Nature Preserves, conducting inventories and helping develop trails in nature preserves throughout Indiana.

The Miller-Campbell addition was a recent acquisition, purchased at auction from the Sanders Estate. The acquisition was made possible by funds from the IHT, TNC, NICHES, and donations made in memory of Sam Miller and Ron Campbell.